

We are taught at a very young age that emptiness is filled from outside. Our hunger and thirst are provided for by others. Our discomforts are relieved by mom and dad or whoever is raising us. Even before we have language, we have a conditioned response to inner sensations of emptiness or lack. It seems so natural and obvious to assume that if there is a feeling of emptiness or lack that we need to look outside for something to fill us up. It is this fundamental part of our conditioning that leads us so far astray from the true source of our soul's nourishment and love.

More simply, it means that we develop very little familiarity with the experience of emptiness or lack. We are too busy trying to resolve or reduce the sensations of emptiness or lack to explore them in greater depth. And yet, what is the sensation of emptiness like? How does nothingness feel when it appears inside of us? How big is the empty space? Can the emptiness inside actually feel bigger than our body? How is that possible?

And what is the texture or quality of the space that seems to be lacking something? Is it completely clear and lacking all qualities, or is the emptiness dark or bright, heavy or light, dry or moist? Even if the open space inside of us feels lacking in something we want like love or a sense of our own worth, is there anything else present in the space? And finally, does the emptiness itself actually hurt or cause us any harm? Or is it our resistance to the feelings of lack and the effort to change our experience that cause us to suffer?

Questions like these can inspire some curiosity about the emptiness itself. We might even discover that emptiness itself is a freeing experience, not necessarily a problem. Empty space is the softest thing in the universe, and it is very low maintenance. There is nothing it can do to harm you, and nothing you can do to harm it. Perhaps the most surprising discovery of all is that nothingness is the true source of everything that really matters in life. All of the peace, joy, and love we experience in life comes directly from the still, silent, pure emptiness of our true nature. It turns out the biggest problem in our life, our sense of lack or incompleteness, is actually our greatest blessing. What a surprise to find so much richness coming from such an unpromising source.

(Note: You can also read a longer article by Nirmala about this subject entitled " [Exploring Emptiness](#) ")